



U.S. Department of Justice

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EVENT: Arrests

Defendant: Ahmad Abboud et al

**INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING ROUTE
SHUT DOWN**

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today that a number of arrests have been made in a significant drug conspiracy over the past ten days in the Detroit area and the vicinity of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Mr. Murphy, who noted the important international cooperation and coordination that led to the arrests, was joined in the announcement by Robert Corso, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, Richard Gauthier, Commander of Toronto Police Detective Services, Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation.

Arrested on June 28, 2007 in the Eastern District of Michigan were AHMAD ABBOD, age 29, of Sterling Heights, Michigan, TONY DAVIS, age 27, of Sterling Heights, Michigan, YAHAB ABBOD, age 27 from Rochester Hills, Michigan; and JONATHAN YALDOO, age 26 of Sterling Heights, Michigan. Criminal Complaints filed in United States District Court charged defendant AHAMD ABBOD with conspiracy to import marijuana into the United States from Canada, while the other three defendants were charged with possession with intent to distribute marijuana. The four Michigan defendants were released on bond, pending a Preliminary Hearing on July 17, 2007.

As set forth in the Complaints, part of the charged criminal activity involved smuggling 370 pounds of marijuana from the Toronto, Canada area into Michigan through St. Joseph Island, Ontario. The alleged smuggling route involved individuals driving from the metro Detroit area to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, in the general vicinity of Sault Ste. Marie, and returning with the 370 pounds of marijuana that had been smuggled from Canada into the United States. This marijuana was allegedly brought to Sterling Heights, Michigan on May 22, 2007, where it was seized by US authorities.

On June 28, 2007, five federal search warrants were executed by agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Sterling Heights Police Department, and the Internal Revenue Service, among other federal agencies. The enforcement action was in furtherance of investigations that have been conducted since 2005, in coordination with Canadian law enforcement agencies. To date, law enforcement activities on the United States side of the border include 13 arrests, more than 1,000 pounds of high-quality marijuana (with a wholesale value over \$4 million), the seizure of 41 kilograms of cocaine, and the seizure of \$350,000.00 in United States currency.

On July 5, 2007, after an eight-month investigation, the Toronto Drug Squad assisted by partner agencies and coordinated with investigators in British Columbia, executed 29 search warrants at a number of locations in British Columbia, Toronto, Mississauga and the York Region of Ontario. In addition, 24 people were arrested in Canada for numerous drug and weapons related offenses. To date, seizures on the Canadian side of the border have totaled approximately \$41,000 in United States currency, \$487,000 in Canadian currency, 1,000 pounds of high-quality marijuana valued at \$3,000,000, and one kilogram of cocaine valued at \$30,000.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "In an age where the need for international cooperation on law enforcement matters is crucial, this case is a prime example of the excellent results that come from combining forces with our Canadian counterparts to cut off a new drug distribution route. Drug traffickers who may have been hoping to exploit the international border are in for a surprise because we are working hand-in-glove to stop them on both sides of the border."

Robert Corso, Special Agent in Charge for the Drug Enforcement Administration, stated that, "This investigation clearly shows that the DEA is working closely with our Canadian law enforcement counterparts in an effort to secure our northern border. This investigation has, with the assistance of our local, federal and Canadian partners, successfully dismantled a large high-grade marijuana smuggling organization while at the same time blocking a previously unknown smuggling route between the United States and Canada."

Staff Superintendent Richard Gauthier, Commander of Toronto Police Detective Services stated, "The illegal exportation of narcotics can occur in any jurisdiction as these arrests have shown. No law enforcement agency can work alone. For this reason, partnerships are essential. This is an excellent example of the Toronto Police Service's continuing efforts to create safer communities by working with our partners to combat international narcotic trade."

"Working with our law enforcement partners to secure our borders against the utilization of illicit drug proceeds remains a top priority," said Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent in charge

of the ICE Office of Investigations in Detroit. "ICE will continue to lessen critical vulnerabilities that threaten our economic security."

A complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Trial cannot be held on felony charges in a complaint. When the investigation is completed a determination will be made whether to seek a felony indictment.

United States Attorney Murphy congratulated the Drug Enforcement Administration, Toronto Police Services, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, Sterling Heights Police Department and Customs and Border Protection, Macomb County Enforcement Team as well as our Canadian law enforcement partners involved in the case for the significant cooperation leading to the arrests, and he noted that the case is being ably prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Wayne F. Pratt.